Canada as a Specialized Power

Patrick Lennox, Dalhousie University

Any outsider to the literature that interrogates "Canada's place in the world" is bound to find the variation in perspectives perplexing. How can one country be simultaneously regarded by its leading scholars of international politics as a principal power, a middle power, **and** a satellite?[1] Comfortable within its otherwise awkward parameters, insiders to this long ongoing debate have allowed pluralism to replace a clear answer to the meta-theoretical question of what makes Canada's place in the world such a difficult problem to solve.

The reason this puzzle remains unsolved is that its three dimensions have yet to be fully grasped by these three contending schools of thought on the matter. Those who have theorized Canada as a principal and middle power have built their assessment primarily on the international dimension; while those who have theorized Canada as an American satellite have focused their analysis on the continental or North American dimension. There is, however, an internal or domestic dimension to the puzzle, as well. And all three dimensions or aspects must be appreciated if—as is the objective of this article—the conundrum of Canada's place in the world is to be holistically resolved.

I argue that Canada's place in the world is a function of its place in North America. Because Canada stands in subordination to the United States at home, it can and must pursue an array specialized roles abroad. Canada is most accurately conceptualized as a specialized power, prone to the performance of roles unsuited to great powers though essential to the proper functioning and amelioration of the status quo international system.[2] The extent to which this specialization is fostered at the policy level will determine the extent of Canada's status as a player on the world stage, and its political coherence at home. This article lays out the underlying logic of this theory of Canada's place in the world. In exposing the faults in the current modes of thinking on this question by showing how they can be corrected by thinking of Canada as a specialized

[1] For reviews see Michael K. Hawes, *Principal Power, Middle Power or Satellite? Competing Perspectives in the Study of Canadian Foreign Policy* (North York: York Research Programme in Strategic Studies, 1984); Maureen Appel Molot "Where Do We, Should We, or Can We Sit? A Review of the Canadian Foreign Policy Literature," *International Journal of Canadian Studies*, Vol, 1, No. 2 (Spring-Fall, 1990): 77-96; David R. Black and Heather Smith, "Notable Exceptions? New and Arrested Directions in Canadian Foreign Policy Literature" *Canadian Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 26, No. 4 (Dec 1993): 745-774; Kim Richard Nossal, *The Politics of Canadian Foreign Policy, Third Edition*. (Scarborough: Prentice Hall, 1997), 52-85; Andrew Fenton Cooper, *Canadian Foreign Policy: Old Habits and New Directions*. (Scarborough: Prentice Hall, 1997), 6-22.

[2] This work, to use the terminology of Robert W. Cox, is thus of a "problem-solving" as opposed to "critical" variety of theorization. "It takes the world as it finds it with the prevailing social and power relationships and the institutions into which they are organized, as the given framework for action. The general aim of problem-solving theory is to make these relationships and institutions work smoothly by dealing effectively with particular sources of trouble." From Cox's "Social Forces, States and World Orders: Beyond International Relations Theory." Robert O. Keohane (ed.) *Neorealism and its Critics*. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1986), 208.

power, this article seeks to establish a new lens through which to understand Canada's place in the world.

Middle Power, Principal Power, or Satellite?

None of the three mainstream conceptions of Canada's place in the world are drawn from the pure theoretical ether of deductive reasoning alone. Rather they have been developed from a fluid interplay of deductive and inductive reasoning. From facts about the country's rank on the international scale of material power indicators—territory, population, GDP, military spending, etc; from emergent patterns in Canadian foreign policy; from observations about the implications of the country's relationship and proximity to the United States; and from the application of both established branches and adaptations of International Relations theory to the problem, have emerged three distinct and identifiable perspectives on "Canada's place in the world." This vague and colloquial turn of phrase—Canada's place in the world—masks the serious theoretical competition between these three schools to parsimoniously explain and predict the patterns of behaviour Canada has and will follow in its international affairs. It is out of such expectations about the patterns in direction and form that Canadian foreign policy will take that these three conceptions of Canada's place in the world find their defining features.

The picture of Canada as a middle power was originally drawn out of comparison. The country was neither great nor completely insignificant as it emerged from the two World Wars. As a result of its "big little" or "little big" ranking, Canadian statesmen like Lester B. Pearson sought distinguishable roles for the country in shaping non-security related aspects of the post-War order. A rules-based, participatory international order, as opposed to a power-based, exclusive international order, corresponded with Canadian interests as a power of middle status and capability. Thus it could be expected that Canada would thrust itself into the fray of international politics on issues where it could be of some functional utility to the development and evolution of an international system "conducive to peace, tranquility and orderly adjustment."[3] Canada pursued this course almost immediately with its service to the United Nations Economic and Social Council in the formative hours of that organization. Further examples of Canada playing the part of the middle power, as opposed to the isolationist free rider, were seen in its multiplicity of peacekeeping efforts, its support for numerous other international organizations, and its efforts to mediate in various international conflict situations. As Black and Smith point out, however, this perspective of Canada's place in the world seems to lacks an underlying or deductive rationale for why it is that "certain middle-sized states would be inclined to engage in these forms of behaviour."[4] The essence of this critique is that the middle power perspective is built on the sand of circular reasoning. Middle powers play middle power roles because they are middle powers. Beyond this

[3] Robert W. Cox, "Middlepowermanship, Japan, and the Future of World Order" *International Journal* XLIV (Autumn 1989): 823.
[4] Black and Smith, "Notable Exceptions?" 760.

"middlepowersmanship"[5] could conceivably capture such a vast array of behavioural patterns that as a theory of the country's place in the world, the Canada as middle power thesis remains nearly impossible to falsify.

A challenge to this nevertheless dominant theoretical view of Canada's place in the world developed in the 1970s.[6] On the basis of particular indices of material capability, Canada is thought to rank in a class above traditional middle powers. As a result, in a diffuse and increasingly complex international system in hegemonic decline, Canada is expected to perform as a principal rather than a middle power in some aspects of international politics. Born out of what Kirton and Dewitt describe as Complex Neo-Realism—essentially a blend of realism and complex interdependence theory—this view of Canada as a principal power predicts patterns of leadership and initiative in the shaping of an international order tailored to Canadian national interests and values. Moreover, Canada is expected to take unilateral actions, to diverge from the positions of its allies, and diversify its international relationships, whenever necessary. Lester Pearson's speech at Temple University in 1965 calling for a pause in the American bombing campaign of North Vietnam in 1965; Pierre Trudeau's unilateral decision to reduce and re-deploy Canada's military forces in NATO's continental European theater in 1969; and the Canadian command of the NATO forces in Kandahar, Afghanistan in 2006 might be seen as evidence of Canada taking a principal power approach to international politics.[7]

The principal power perspective, in a rather avant-garde manner, adapts mainstream strands of international relations theory to the explanation of patterns of Canada's external behaviour. It does not suffer from circular reasoning like the middle power perspective; rather, it is firmly grounded in an array of assumptions about the nature of the international realm and the driving forces behind state behaviour within it that have been derived and adapted from established International Relations theory. This perspective has, however, been met with a fairly widespread skepticism, and little in the way of cumulative empirical investigation of its precepts has been done (aside from the work of Kirton) likely because of the perceived disconnect between the theoretical expectations about Canada's foreign relations that comprise the essence of the principal power view and more mainstream assessments of Canada's stature on the world stage.

Unlike either the middle or the principal power perspectives, the view of Canada as a satellite focuses on the position of the country within the continental hierarchy. Influenced by dependency theory, the view of Canada as a satellite expects patterns of subordination to the will of the United States. In this literature, Canada is seen not as a helpful proponent of peace, stability and multilateralism, or a leader in the development of a rules-based international order, but as a victim of American domination. Being

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[5] John Holmes, *The Better Part of Valour: Essays on Canadian Diplomacy*. (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1970.), 16.

[6] See James Eayrs, "Defining a New Place for Canada in the Hierarchy of World Power," *International Perspectives* (May/June, 1975).

[7] David Dewitt and John Kirton, *Canada as a Principal Power*. (Toronto: John Wiley & Sons, 1983); and more recently John J. Kirton, *Canadian Foreign Policy in a Changing World*. (Toronto: Thompson-Nelson, 2007), 118-20, 132, 198. ; for a recent portrait of the Harper Government's principal power foreign policy see Kirton "Canada Shows its Strength" *Toronto Star* (31 October 2006), A21.

beholden to the United States constrains Canada's ability to pursue an independent or autonomous foreign policy.[8] Canada's place in the world is thus constricted by its subordinate place in North America. As a result, on the international stage, Canada is expected to play the role of "chore-boy"[9] or "powder monkey"[10] for the United States, to the extent that plays a role at all. The compulsion to perform in this manner is compounded by the class of Canadian business elites who exercise excessive influence over the levers of power in Ottawa, and have a vested interest in Canada maintaining sound summit and diplomatic relations with the United States while moving towards broader and deeper continental economic integration. Evidence of the "chore boy" variant of this view of Canada's place in the world was seen perhaps most notably in the country's "quiet complicity" in support of the American war against North Vietnam, 1954-1973.[11] Throughout the last decade the notion that Canada was fading out as a power,[12] and losing its place in the world[13] took on even greater prominence as America's "unipolar moment," to borrow Charles Krauthammer's phrase, seemed to leave little room or need for the country on the world stage.

The view of Canada as a satellite developed out of an appreciation of the vast material asymmetry between the two countries that gave rise to the high levels of American ownership of the Canadian economy, and the increasing reliance of Canadian exporters on access to the American market.[14] This International Political Economy perspective is distinct from the middle power and principal power schools of thinking because of its focus on the structuring dimensions of the continental hierarchy on Canada's place in the world, and because of its ability to capture the domestic element of dominant class structure as a determining influence on Canada's approach to the world.

The implications of the hierarchy at home for Canada's place abroad, however, have only been partially understood by the satellite school. Revealing of this is Canadian parity of participation in the international system with the United States, as indicated by the involvement of the two countries in peacekeeping missions, and arms control and disarmament agreements, and their representation in Intergovernmental Organizations (IGOs) and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs).[15] Canada is not the stay at home

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[8] See Stephen Clarkson, ed. *An Independent Foreign Policy for Canada?* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1968); and Clarkson, *Canada and the Reagan Challenge*. (Toronto: James Lorimer & Co., 1985)

[9] Victor Levant, *Quiet Complicity: Canada's Involvement in the Vietnam War* (Toronto: Between the Line, 1986)

[10] James M. Minifie, *Peacemaker or Powder-Monkey: Canada's Role in a Revolutionary World*. (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1965)

[11] See Levant, *Quiet Complicity*; and Charles Taylor, *Snow Job: Canada, the United States, and Vietnam [1954-1973]*. (Toronto: Anansi, 1978).

[12] See Norman Hillmer and Maureen Appel Molot, (eds.) *Canada Among Nations 2002: A Fading Power*. (Toronto: Oxford, 2002).

[13] Andrew Cohen, *While Canada Slept: How We Lost our Place in the World*. (Toronto: McClelland Steward, 2003).

[14] Archibald MacMechan, "Canada as a Vassal State." *Canadian Historical Review*, Vol. 1, No. 4: 347-53; Hugh Keenleyside, "American Economic Penetration of Canada." *Canadian Historical Review*, Vol. 8, No. 1: 31-41.

[15] According to the International Security Network and the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, *FIRST* Facts on International Relations and Security Trends http://first.sipri.org/index.php Canada

victim of the big American bully that some satellite school theorists have a tendency to envision. On the contrary, the hierarchy at home has enabled and compelled Canada to take on active and particular modes of participation and engagement in international politics. These modes of participation and engagement have been recognized and emphasized by the middle and principal power schools of thinking on Canada's place in the world, but for reasons that fail to account for the domestic and continental bases for this behaviour.

Both the middle and principal power schools are correct to recognize Canada, a wealthy western democracy and member of the G8, as being of a category of state above Costa Rica or Peru, however neither has properly conceived of Canada's place in the world as being fundamentally a function of its place in North America. The reason for this oversight is that the assumptions of both the middle and principal power schools are based in two of the mainstreams of International Relations theory, which have a great difficulty conceptualizing and understanding the behaviour of secondary states (or non-great powers) in the international system.

The middle power view of Canada is arguably founded on an "English School" conception of the structure of the international system. Based primarily on the writing of Hedley Bull and Martin Wight, this theoretical perspective on International Politics works from a baseline appreciation of the anarchic nature of the realm, towards a more nuanced view of the effects that socially constructed institutions like war, diplomacy, the balance of power, and international law can nevertheless have on the patterns of state behaviour.[16] In this sense it develops out of a Lockean, as opposed to Hobbesian understanding of the implications of anarchic structures for the patterns of individual and (by analogy) state behaviour.

Conversely, the view of Canada as a principal power is rooted in what is essentially a Hobbesian perspective on the implications of anarchy for world politics. Neo-Realism, whether rendered in the complex form of Kirton and Dewitt, or the traditional form of Kenneth Waltz,[17] holds a less optimistic view of the possibilities for interstate cooperation than the English School, and is more inclined to recognize power, as opposed to institutional norms or values, as the primary determining factor in international political outcomes.

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was a part of 135 Peacekeeping missions since 1997, while the United States was part of 137; for arms control and disarmament agreements this same source has Canada as a signatory to 21, and the United States as a signatory to 25. According to the Union of International Associations, ed. *Yearbook of International Organizations 1997/98*, Vol. 2. 34th Edition. (Munchen: K.G. Saur, 1997), Canada was a member of 345 IGOS; the United States, 382. The same source has Canada recognizing 3970 NGOs; the United States, 4618.

[16] See Hedley Bull, *The Anarchical Society: A Study of Order in World Politics*. (London: Macmillan, 1977); and Martin Wight, *Systems of States*, (New Jersey: Humanities Press, 1977).
[17] See his *Theory of International Politics*. (Don Mills: Addison-Wesley, 1979).

The problem with these two mainstreams of theorizing world politics is that each begins with a mono-structural conception of the international system. Neither takes into account the possibility of hierarchical structures forming within the broader international anarchy. As a result, both retain a substantial blind spot when it comes to understanding how states in asymmetrical relationships are prone to act. That hierarchical structures can and do form and coexist within the broader international anarchy must be recognized if the patterns of behaviour that define a country like Canada's place in the world are to be holistically understood.

Indeed, the assertion that such hierarchical structures can coexist within the broader international anarchy and have an important and measurable impact on the patterns of state behaviour amounts to a theoretical proposition that can be subsequently understood by the term *structural specialization.* Importantly, hierarchy within anarchy is a subject that is beginning to gain the attention of contemporary International Relations theorists who are slowly starting to develop an appreciation for what has been lost in the elegance of the mono-structural view of the international system.[18]

The theory of Canada as a specialized power that is to be set down in the following sections of this article seeks to bring together into a unified and parsimonious mode of theoretical explanation the domestic, continental and international forces compelling the particular modes of behaviour the country has repeatedly pursued in world politics. This theory should be generalizable across the range of sovereign states engaged in dependent relationships with superordinate partners.

Hierarchy at Home, Specialization Abroad

The cannon of classic liberal political philosophy is united on the point that government, responsible for the basic physical security of its citizens, is the permissive condition for individuals to pursue a strategy of specialization in search of well being. Without government, in the anarchic condition of the state of nature, Hobbes, Locke, Kant and Rousseau all ascertained that each individual would have to maintain all of the means for his or her survival, as reliance upon others (interdependence) would become a form of vulnerability in a realm without law and trust. As a result, each individual in the state of nature would have to remain functionally similar in order to survive; specialization under such conditions would be a dangerous, irrational strategy, as it would imply dependence upon others.[19]

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[18] For examples, see Jack Donnelly, "Sovereign Inequalities and Hierarchy in Anarchy: American Power and International Society." *European Journal of International Relations* Vol. 12 No. 2; David A. Lake, "The New Sovereignty in International Relations", *International Studies Review* 2003 5(3): 303-23; and Alexander Wendt and Daniel Friedheim, "Hierarchy under Anarchy: Informal Empire and the East German State" *International Organization*, 49(4): 689-732.

[19] Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan* (New York: Penguin, 1981), 119; John Simons, "Locke's State of Nature," *Political Theory*, Vol. 17, No. 2 (1989): 449-470; Immanuel Kant, "Perpetual Peace: A Philosophical Sketch." In *Kant's Political Writings,* ed. Hans Reiss, trans. H. B. Nisbet (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1970); Jean-Jacques Rousseau, "A Discourse on the origin of inequality" in *The Social Contract and Discourses,* trans. G.D.H. Cole (London: J.M. Dent and Sons, 1973).

The analogy between the state of nature and the realm of international politics, which is without an overarching power, capable of presiding over a common body of law, has been drawn not only by the state of nature theorists themselves,[20] but by modern International Relations theorists as well.[21] This insight, that the realm of international politics is anarchic, has in fact become the foundational insight from which much of mainstream international relations theory has derived.[22]

From this insight that anarchy—the basic ordering principal of international politics—had its own causal kick emanating from the deep structure of the system, two further insights followed: first, anarchy would preclude the possibility of state specialization in particular aspects of international politics; second, hierarchy—the dichotomous ordering principle—was not a possibility within the realm unless either a world government or a global empire was established by agreement or force.[23] This, as Jack Donnelly has pointed out, is "a conceptual error that significantly impedes understanding the nature of international inequalities. Rather than thinking of anarchy *or* hierarchy we should attend to hierarchy *in* anarchy."[24] Donnelly's insight, which is representative of an evolving trend amongst IR theorists thinking about the conceptualization of the structure of the international system, needs to be taken seriously by those wishing to understand Canada-U.S. relations and Canada's place in the world from this structural vantage point.

If we look, for example at the structure of the Canada-U.S. relationship, we can see very clearly and without much in the way of elaborate argumentation that it does not operate according to the competitive, self-help conditions imposed on rival states by the otherwise anarchic structure of the international system. On the contrary, Canada is engaged in a dependent relationship with the United States in terms of both its economic and physical security, and thus finds itself on the subordinate end of an inter-state hierarchy that has formed within the broader international anarchy.

Take for example the overwhelming trade dependency that sees 85% of Canadian exports headed south into the American marketplace. A border closure might pose significant costs to the U.S. economy; but such an event would send the Canadian economy into depression. Consider also NORAD as an institution representative of how the material asymmetry between the two countries has shaped their hierarchical defence relationship. NORAD headquarters were built into an American part of the Rocky Mountain range. It was agreed that the Commander-in-chief of NORAD would always be an American, and his Deputy Commander-in-Chief, a Canadian, would take decision-making power only

[20] Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 120; Kant, "Perpetual Peace," 103; Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Project of Perpetual Peace: Rousseau's Essay*, trans. Edith M. Nuttall, with an introduction by G. Lowes Dickinson, (London: Richard Cobden-Sanderson, 1927) p. 7.
[21] See most importantly, Kenneth Waltz, *Man, The State, and War: A Theoretical Analysis* (New York: Columbia UP, 1954).
[22] Brian C. Schmidt, *The Political Discourse of Anarchy: A Disciplinary History of International Relations* (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 1998).
[23] See for example the seminal work of Kenneth Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*. (Don Mills: Addison-Wesley, 1979).
[24] Donnelly, "Sovereign Inequalities", 141.

when the Commander was absent. Today, over 94 percent of NORAD's personnel are American, and over 84 percent of NORAD's budget is paid for with American funds. And while Canada supplies the remainder of the staff and the budget, the practical imbalance in this symbolic institution remains an obvious reflection of the hierarchy in the continental relationship.

To conceptualize the structure of the Canada-U.S. relationship in this way, as a hierarchy within anarchy, allows for the formation of hypotheses about a number of different aspects of Canada-U.S. relations, and Canada's place in the world. Here the focus remains on drawing out the logical implications of this structural condition at home for Canada's relations abroad.

It will be argued in the following section that *the hierarchy at home in North America not only enables Canadian specialization in an array of aspects of international politics, but it also compels such modes of specialization for Canadian state perseverance.* In the realm of international relations, this perseverance imperative amounts to the need to maintain external and internal sovereignty. External sovereignty is maintained through continued legitimate participation and engagement in international politics. Internal sovereignty is maintained through the preservation of a coherent political community within the territorial confines of the state.

Subordinate State Specialization

Reasoning by analogy, if hierarchy is the permissive or generative cause of specialization, then just as the individual in domestic society must specialize in some trade or vocation in order to make him or herself necessary to that society as a means to ensure his or her survival and well being, so too must a subordinate state in the international system find a way to make itself necessary to the superordinate state and to the broader international society in order to ensure its survival and well-being. This necessity provides the impulse for the subordinate state to specialize, playing particular roles in the international system that remain distinct from those most suited to great powers.

Specialization in the international system is related to the internal functional differentiation allowed to the subordinate state by virtue of its position within the hierarchy in the international anarchy. When, by virtue of its dependency on another sovereign for its physical and economic security, a state is afforded the opportunity to become less of a typical Westphalian warfare state—to channel more of its resources into education, or health care, or infrastructure—in other words, when subordinate states become internally functionally differentiated, then they take on the characteristics which allow them to become externally functionally differentiated.

A direct and immediate connection might exist between a subordinate state's internal functional differentiation and its external functional differentiation—i.e. state emphasis on health care might provide the domestic background expertise and material capability for structural specialization in preventing and combating the transnational spread of

infectious disease. But more generally, it is the movement away from warfare that both allows and compels the movement towards structural specialization. A state's movement away from maintaining an independent warfare capability negates the threat it poses to other states; thus creating the internal preconditions for that state to take on a benign as opposed to potentially malignant external posture. This gives the subordinate state a comparative advantage in the performance of roles unsuited to great powers who maintain an independent war fighting capacity, and thus the power to impose their will through coercive force on other states in the system.

Interestingly, for a Canadian audience, John Holmes hinted at this very notion in his collection of essays entitled, *The Better Part of Valour*. He explained that the "precarious state of the world after 1945 required the forceful intervention in far corners of a benevolent great power like the United States. It turned out also that the preservation of order often required the services of middle powers whose principal value was their very incapacity to threaten or command." Holmes continued on to note that in this post-War era of international politics, Canada had shed its reluctance to be useful. "Canadian's coveted responsibilities, and Canadian diplomatic missions multiplied from seven in 1939 to sixty-five in 1962."[25]

The internal functional differentiation of states like Canada recommends structural specialization as a means to survival in the anarchic international system. Compelled to work towards ensuring their survival through means other than material power accumulation, and power balancing—the strategies recommended by the otherwise anarchic structure of the international system—subordinate states can be expected to exploit their comparative advantage in the performance of roles in the international system not suited to their superordinate partners. The performance of these roles will contribute to the preservation of their external and internal sovereignty through the construction of a recognizable and distinct international identity. The development of a distinct identity (reinforced and reimagined through the continued performance of these roles) in the world will help to preserve the legitimacy of the state and its authority over its society.

The performance of a given specialized role on the part of a subordinate state is determined by a triad of constraints imposed by the dual structural pressures of hierarchy and anarchy.

First, since the subordinate state comes to derive a portion of its internal cohesion from its external functions, internal constraints from its own domestic society will play a role in determining its specialized behaviour in the international system. The dominant ideas about the state's place in world politics formed within its society as a result of preexisting patterns of the state's behaviour in the international system will come to set the parameters of possible (legitimate) state action in this realm. These parameters of legitimate behaviour act both as constraining and compelling internal or domestic structural pressures bearing down the state. On the one hand, they limit what the state can and cannot do in the external sphere with the broad based support of its population.

[25] Holmes, *The Better Part of Valour*, 6.

On the other hand, they suggest what the state ought to do when presented with certain opportunities of perceived obligations to engage in world affairs.

Second, since the ability of the subordinate state to specialize in the international system is a result of its position in the inter-state hierarchy, the requirements and needs of the superordinate state will factor in determining the specialized behaviour the subordinate state in the international system. In the performance of roles in which it has a comparative advantage over its superordinate partner the subordinate state will be expected to carry its share of the burden of system management. The interests of the superordinate state will always, therefore, be a structuring influence on the particular modes of behaviour pursued by the subordinate state in the international system.

Finally, to complete the triad, the specialized behaviour of the subordinate state must be of some utility to the functioning of the status quo international system. Subordinate state specialization is thus generated in part by the demand for non-great power intervention in a complex international system that requires more to remain functional and stable than great power leadership and direction alone. States with specialized capabilities carry out functions unsuited to great powers in an effort to ameliorate potential systemic ruptures and to serve as a buffer between those states that benefit and those states that struggle under the status quo world political and economic system.

The following thematic functions or roles are those that conform to the triad of structural pressures bearing down on subordinate state specialization in the international system. An operational definition of each role is followed by Canadian case examples. These examples are only meant to be suggestive of the Canadian tendency to perform in a specialized capacity as an alternative means of perseverance as a sovereign state in the international system. Systematic testing of this hypothesis in the Canadian context alone and in comparative perspective with other like-cases such as Norway, the Netherlands, Sweden and Australia will form the basis of future research aimed at investigating the nature of subordinate state behaviour in the international system.

Mediator/Supervisor: in the aftermath of inter-state, or civil war, states with neither the capacity for nor the inclination towards imperialism are necessary to separate combatants and prisoners of war, establish stability, help implement peace treaties, and withdraw. The term often associated with this mode of behaviour is peacekeeping. The mediation and supervision of post-combat situations is of high significance for the ability of the international system to maintain order and stability. Disorder and conflict in one part of the complex interdependent international political system can easily spread to create disorder and conflict in other parts of the system. Great powers of course have the military and diplomatic capability to perform the service of mediation and supervision. However, their subordinate partners have a comparative advantage over them in the performance of such a service to the international system, due to their internal functional differentiation which gives them an unthreatening external posture particularly suited to mediation/supervision roles.

Examples of Canada's performance of variations on the mediator/supervisor role are numerous, but perhaps most famously they can be seen in its service to the International Commissions for Supervision and Control (ICSC) in Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos during the period of 1954-1973; the United Nations Emergency Force in Suez, 1954; the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus, 1963-present; and to the UN Protection Force in Yugoslavia, 1992-present.

Messenger: in situations when communication breaks down between states in conflict or about to be in conflict, it becomes necessary for a third party to play an interlocutor role. By passing messages faithfully back and forth between the two parties, the messenger state works towards a resolution to a potential combat or crisis situation. Such a human role in a complex international political system in which language barriers, surveillance technology, fear and paranoia can combine to tip the balance in crisis situations towards instability and armed conflict is of great consequence. Great powers, however, either because they are on one side or the other of these situations, or because they have a perceived myopic self-interest in the outcome are uniquely unsuited to the performance of such a messenger role. This gives the comparative advantage to subordinate states in this important aspect of international politics, thus creating the necessity for both their continued sovereign existence and their maintenance and cultivation of this advantage in the performance of such a service to the international system.

Canada served in this capacity during the war in Vietnam, as its commissioner on the ICSC, Blair Seaborn was used as an interlocutor between Washington and Hanoi in 1964;[26] prior to this, during the Cuban missile crisis, Dean Rusk, President Kennedy's defense secretary, suggested that Canada's ambassador in Havana be used to try to explain to Fidel Castro that Cuba was being victimized in the conflict.[27]

Advocate: Raising awareness of a problem or issue, generating inter-state cooperation for resolution of the problem or issue, and/or defending a particular position (i.e. West vs. East) on a problem or issue are advocacy roles that fall to specialized states. The conventional political term employed in description of this type of behaviour is multilateralism. Because of their superior material capabilities great powers are uniquely inclined towards unilateralism. This inclination can be staved off by the work of profound political leaders and statesmen, but it nevertheless is an underlying tendency associated with great power. Yet the need for multilateralism or advocacy work to collectively work towards resolutions to otherwise intractable international problems and towards what Stanley Hoffman referred to as "peaceful change" remains.[28] A comparative advantage in the performance of such an advocacy role exists for subordinate states that, without the ability to "go it alone," have thus a genuine interest in generating multilateral action towards collective measures as a means to resolving the unique problems presented in an interdependent, anarchic system of sovereign states.

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[26] J. Blair Seaborn, "Mission to Hanoi: The Canadian Channel, May 1964-November 1965" in Arthur E. Blanchette, ed., *Canadian Peacekeepers in Indochina, 1954-1973* (Ottawa: Golden Dog, 2002), 92.
[27] Timothy Naftali and Philip Zelikow, eds., *The Presidential Recordings, John F. Kennedy: The Great Crises, Volume 2*. (New York: Norton, 2001), 405.
[28] Stanley Hoffman, *Gulliver's Troubles*. (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1968), 371.

Again, there are numerous examples of Canada working in such a capacity at the international level. However, its efforts as an advocate of nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament, and in promoting the human security agenda and the Responsibility to Protect report stand out as paradigmatic examples of such advocacy behaviour by Canada.

Problem solver: seemingly intractable international problems create opportunities for the ingenuity and initiative of a specialized power for their resolution. The political term for this behaviour, at least in the Canadian context is, of course, "helpful fixing." Such behaviour is particularly suited to subordinate states because they are, for the most part, "outside the box" of great power politics. They are thus more able to see the modes of conflict resolution, methods of crisis aversion, and courses of action towards the resolution of problems that have eluded the great powers themselves. Indeed, this ability, should it be proven repeatedly, will come to be depended upon by the great powers in charge of managing the major movements of world affairs; thus creating a bond of interdependence between the system and the continued sovereign survival of the subordinate state.

Notable examples of such behaviour on Canada's part include Lester B. Pearson's efforts at Suez, 1954; Pierre Trudeau's peace initiative to de-escalate the Cold War between the Soviet Union and the United States, 1983; and most recently the efforts of Paul Hienbecker and Jean Chretien to generate a second UN resolution to win Security Council support for the impending war against Iraq, 2003.

Intelligence gatherer: uncertainty and misperception are constant and potentially deadly factors in international politics. Occasions repeatedly arise when non-principal powers will be granted access to crucial information the principals are not privy to. The accurate gathering and communication of that information thus becomes a specialization suited to subordinate states. Blair Seaborn was instructed to play this role during his missions to Hanoi in 1964; and a major part of Canada's ongoing mission in Afghanistan involves intelligence gathering on behalf of the United States.[29]

Subordinate states can be expected to fill one of these functions when at least two of the structural imperatives to do so coincide with an opportunity vacuum. For example, if the internal pressures emanating from lagging or faltering internal cohesion and the hierarchical pressures emanating from a needy superordinate state combine with an opportunity to fill a mediator/supervisor role, the subordinate state can be expected to do so. If only one of the structural pressures is present, the subordinate state can be expected to reject the opportunity to pursue a specialized role in the international system. For example, if the opportunity to act as an intelligence gatherer on the part of the superordinate state exists, but there is no domestic support for the mission, and the balance of the international community appears opposed to the subordinate state's

[29] Col Alain Tremblay, "The Canadian Experience in Afghanistan" in Brian S. MacDonald and David S. McDonough, *The New World of Robust International Peacekeeping Operations: What Roles for NATO and Canada?* (Toronto: Royal Canadian Military Institute, 2005), 49.

involvement, it can be expected that sovereignty concerns would trump concerns for good relations with the superordinate state. In this hypothetical case the subordinate state would expectedly remain uninvolved, since only one (as opposed to the necessary two) of the three structural pressures to perform in a specialized capacity is present.

This deductive theory can be tested against rival hypotheses derived from the current body of literature on the topic of Canada's place in the world. For example, were Canada to pursue a strategy of isolationism, neglecting time and again opportunities to participate in international politics through the fulfillment of specialized roles, the predictions of the satellite school of thinking on Canada's place in the world would look increasingly more accurate. Canada would fade into the background of international politics, obscured by the shadow of its superpower protector. Evidence to support the "partner to behemoth" version of the satellite school's perspective, would be seen in Canada's consistent subservience to the will and needs of the United States throughout its engagements in world affairs.

Were Canada, on the other hand, to consistently take on leadership roles in international politics, to engage in an array of international relationships with traditional and non-traditional allies, and to unilaterally diverge from the positions of other states on matters of import to the peace and stability of the international system, then evidence to support the principal power thesis would exist.

Differentiating what has traditionally been viewed as middle power behaviour from specialization is less obvious. This may in fact point to one of the reasons for the dominance of the middle power perspective: it catches a wide array of behavioural patterns, and as a result is difficult to disconfirm. The view of Canada as a specialized power, in contrast, establishes a specified array of roles that Canada can be expected to fulfill in the event that a specified set of structural pressures compel it to do so. In this sense, then, it may not be necessary (or possible) to develop a way to test the middle power thesis against the specialized power thesis, but rather to allow the specialized power thesis to subsume the middle power thesis should it prove a more accurate analytical and predictive lens than the satellite and principal power perspectives.

It is important to understand, however, that the view of Canada as a specialized power predicts, given Canada's place in North America, the types of behaviour that it will have a tendency to follow in the international sphere. To the extent that Canada specializes in the performance of the above roles, it can expect to become more secure in its internal and external sovereignty. The performance of the roles will bring the country into a place of international prominence, which will translate into a strengthened sense of internal coherence at home.

To the extent that Canada overreaches and pursues a principal power strategy, it can expect to confront foreign policy failures leading to a diminishment of its status in the international community, and to domestic political difficulties. To the extent that it pursues a satellite strategy, similar repercussions can be expected both abroad and at home eventually leading towards the dissolution of Canada as a sovereign state.

Thus, this "problem solving" mode of theorizing Canada's place in the current status quo world order prescribes specialization for the country in international roles in which it has a comparative advantage. Through the pursuit and execution of these roles Canada can bolster its status on the world stage; improve its internal coherence at home; contribute to the smooth functioning of its relationship with the United States in North America; and work towards stability, order, and peaceful adjustment in the current world order.

Conclusion

Traditionally, Canada's international relations have been thought to occur in two distinct spheres: on the one hand, Canada's bilateral relations with the United States are where the country's vital security and prosperity interests are pursued and managed; on the other hand, exists Canada's dabbling abroad in the multilateral, or internationalist sphere. In this latter case, the country's actions are seen as voluntary, and largely unnecessary for the continued well being of the political community at home.[30] The view of Canada as a specialized power demonstrates that this perspective which sees a disconnect between Canada's place in North America and its place in the world is deeply flawed. Canada's place in the world is a function of its place in North America. What Canada does abroad is structurally conditioned and impelled by its place at home in North America. Moreover, the view of Canada as a specialized power suggests that far from voluntarism, what the country accomplishes in the international sphere is vitally important for the maintenance of its internal and external sovereignty. There is a powerful national interest in Canada's performance of specialized roles in the international system. The recognition of this, of course, suggests an alternative rationale for what has elsewhere been referred to as "niche diplomacy." If a voluntarist foreign policy is to be pursued, the "niche diplomacy" reasoning goes, it might as well be focused and economical, and achieve the most bang for the taxpayers' buck. The view of Canada as a specialized power suggests that specialization in mediation/supervision, interlocution, problem solving, advocacy, and intelligence gathering is necessary for Canadian perseverance. It is the strategy in the world that the hierarchy at home recommends.

To understand why this is the case, consider the possibility of Canada not pursuing the so-called voluntary aspects of its foreign policy. In this case, Canadian foreign policy would be largely limited to trade, border, and security issues at home in North America. Abroad, this would create the impression that Canada was little more than a northern extension of the United States. At home, a similar view could easily come to enjoy a place of prominence amongst a domestic public awash in American cultural mediums from music to movies to twenty-four hour per day cable news outlets. The pursuit of specialized roles in the world for Canada contributes in an important way to the creation of a distinct Canadian identity for the country both at home and abroad. This distinct identity is a necessary condition for the maintenance of a viable and united political community.

[30] Denis Stairs, "The Making of Hard Choices in Canadian Foreign Policy" in David Carment, Fen Osler Hampson and Norman Hillmer eds. *Canada Among Nations, 2004: Setting Priorities Straight*. (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2004), 21-42.

Moreover, the Canadian military reliance upon the United States is to an extent offset by the performance of specialized roles in the international system that the United States itself, as a result of its tremendous military capacity and influence cannot perform, or is comparatively disadvantaged at performing. In performing such specialized roles, a sovereign and independent Canada makes itself functionally necessary to the United States in its own specialized capacity as the hegemonic leader of the Western world, and as the dominant power on the international stage.

Traditional explanations of Canada's specialized international roles or its place in the world tend to draw on unit or individual level variables to make their cases. Conventionally, the argument is made that Canada's ability to be a peacekeeper or a helpful multilateralist in the international system stems from its tolerant and pacific political culture, its lack of an imperial past, or its democratic values which are so highly regarded by the world. These are unit-level arguments, which neglect to consider Canada's structural position in the continental hierarchy and the ability and necessity this position creates for specialization. Arguments are also consistently made that refer to particularly gifted or energetic Canadians, such as Lester B. Pearson or Lloyd Axworthy, as explanations for the country's specialized international behaviour. Such arguments, like their unit level counterparts, also fail to consider the position of the country in the continental system that permits and creates the necessity for such activity in the broader international system. This is not to say that unit, or individual level variables do not carry any causal weight in determining when and how Canada will perform specialized roles in the international system, but it is to say that the underlying permissive or generative cause of this specialization has heretofore been overlooked.